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RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1410
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 4063
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 3307
RUEHNEH/AMCONSUL HYDERABAD 0069
RUEHKKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1788
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 5621
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 2252
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS; NEW DELHI.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press. The Mission reports on English-language media via email through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

¶1. "IT IS BETTER TO EVADE WAR", editorial in the December 22, 2008 right-of-center Urdu daily "URDU TIMES", Mumbai: "The most worrisome aspect of Indo-Pak imbroglio is that both countries are nuclear states. Both of them will be destroyed in the event of a nuclear war. India's economy was growing at 9% annually, something already at risk due to the global economic recession. If a war takes place, the rate of growth and development may further decline to 3 or 4 per cent. It means the war will be disastrous for India's progress and development. Under these circumstances, war must be evaded at any cost."

¶2. "PREFERENCE FOR DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE", editorial in the December 23, 2008 right-of-center Urdu daily "SIASAT", Hyderabad: "Pakistan is the only Islamic nuclear power in the world. World powers particularly United States of America are worried about Pakistan's nuclear weapons. If these weapons of mass destruction were to fall into the hands of terrorists active in Pakistan, it would be a catastrophe for the entire world, especially the West. From this perspective, any tension which pitches both the countries against each other should be avoided. A number

of world powers are upset over emerging extremist elements in Pakistan. These destructive forces are today making India a target, but they may target other countries tomorrow. Sagacious steps are most needed to ensure durable peace not only in Pakistan but also throughout the entire subcontinent. Any sort of tension could bring the two nuclear states at daggers drawn. No doubt, India received global moral support after Mumbai attacks. It should now reciprocate by preferring diplomatic pressure over military action."

¶3. "RATHER KIYANI IS BETTER, THINKS DELHI" front-page analysis by New Delhi Bureau Chief Jayanta Ghosal in the December 24 nationalist Kolkata Bengali ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA. "...Under the changed circumstances India has decided to exert pressure on the Pakistani Chief of Staff Parwez Kiyani. The FBI is also extending unprecedented help to India...and it is clear from American intelligence reports that it is not only the 'non-state' actors but a section of the state is also involved in the Mumbai massacre... India, therefore, feels that another army coup in Pakistan is only a matter of time. The U.S. had dreamed of restoring peace in Pakistan by bringing Benazir Bhutto's party back in power but the Pakistani Army-ISI combine wants to establish before the world that peace will not return during the Zardari regime. Although Zardari is taking decision on issues like loans from the World Bank or the IMF, Kiyani has the last word on other issues. A section of the diplomatic community in India feels that it will rather be better for India if

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Kiyani totally captures power. The Pakistani army or the ISI cannot be controlled through negotiations with Zardari but it will be easier if talks are held with Kiyani."

¶4. "PAKISTAN'S LIMITLESS AUDACITY" editorial in the December 24 Kolkata Bengali pro-BJP BARTAMAN. "... This time the international community has kept up its pressure on Pakistan ... Starting from the United States to Britain, France, Germany, Israel, and others have all expressed their annoyance with Pakistan on its handling of terrorism... It is a big gain for India that attacks in Mumbai received such international attention... But it has also created a problem. The more the international pressure intensifies, Islamabad's stand further turns to duplicity. It is not yet clear whether this is intentional or a mere display of the Pakistani government's weakness... On earlier occasions, India and for that matter, the U.S. had cautioned Pakistan against abetting terrorism but every time Pakistan managed to skirt the issue citing various excuses. Though Pakistan is now facing ... attacks from the world community there seems be no end to Pakistan's audacity."

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